

Economic Development Committee

Monday, September 16, 2013 7:00 PM
Old Library, 5 Fairbank St., Harvard, MA

MINUTES

Members Present: Jim Stevens, Chair, Rich Maiore, Vice Chair, Elaine Lazarus, Duncan Chapman

Others Present: Tim Schmoyer, Planning Board liaison, Peter Warren, Christopher Sintros

1. Reorganization

A motion was made and seconded to appoint Jim Stevens as Chairman for the next year. The vote in favor was unanimous. A motion was made and seconded to appoint Rich Maiore as Vice Chairman for the next year. The vote in favor was unanimous.

2. Committee Membership

It was noted that the two candidates to fill the vacancy on the Committee are present, and Mr. Stevens described the Committee's mission. The activities of the Committee over the last year were reviewed. Mr. Chapman noted that since the letters to business owners went out, he has met with some of them. He stated that they have wanted to know what they can expect and have questions about what will happen with Devens.

It was noted that there are two candidates and it may be advantageous to change the Committee's organization such that there is an alternate member who can help to constitute a quorum if needed.

Mr. Warren described his background and stated that the Commercial (C) District needs attention, and something should happen to improve the appearance. He stated that people, including those who live in the area, want a restaurant, pharmacy and grocery store. He stated he is a strong believer that the area needs an upgrade, and he is concerned about how cooperative the Planning Board will be to make something happen.

Mr. Sintros described his background in the senior living profession and stated his interest in the need for strategic planning. He stated a strong economy is important for a small town. He stated he wants the Town to grow and thrive, and wants to support this effort. He stated that he would be happy to be appointed an alternate member.

It was the consensus that both individuals would be an asset to the Committee, and to recommend to the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen that they establish an "alternate" position and appoint Peter Warren as a full member and Chris Sintros as an alternate member.

3. Update on Report to Board of Selectmen and Planning Board

It was stated that at a July 30 update to the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen, they expressed an interest in finding out what the maximum buildout is in the C District, the current

vacancy rate, and how much revenue a grocery store would bring in. It was stated that it appeared that the members do not want to make any changes to the C District until the Devens issue is resolved. The Committee discussed these issues. It was noted that the master plan work will likely identify a buildout number. Ms. Lazarus will look at the assessed values of some existing supermarkets to get an idea of potential revenues. The Committee noted that with respect to Devens, Harvard may want an entirely different composition for the C District than would occur at Devens, because Harvard residents are interested in having services (i.e. supermarket, pharmacy, etc.) on Ayer Road, not at Devens. The viability of the C District for medical offices and related facilities was also discussed.

4. Master Plan

After discussion, it was determined that Ms. Lazarus would be the liaison to the Master Plan Steering Committee, and Mr. Maiore would try to attend the meetings if she cannot.

5. FY14 Goals

The Committee reviewed the FY14 goals and objectives that were identified in the “Five Year Objectives and Strategies” materials submitted to the Board of Selectmen in September 2012. It was the consensus that the Committee would continue to work on the identified items.

6. Minutes

The Committee voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the meetings on 2/19/13 and 3/16/13.

Adjourned: 8:35 PM

Approved: October 24, 2013

Documents used at the meeting:

Meeting agenda

Draft Minutes of 2/19/13 and 3/16/13

EDC Five Year Goals and Objectives, September 2012